



How to Use the Swedish National Archives: Riksarkivet Website

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The Swedish National Archives (Riksarkivet) is one of the oldest authorities of the Swedish government with roots back to the 1200s. Under King Gustav Vasa many old documents were gathered into the archive which was in the Tre Kronor Castle in Stockholm. Tragically, the castle burned down in 1697 and a large part of the archive was destroyed including most medieval documents. Today the archive is organized into 5 departments:

- The Regional Department
- National Department
- Department of Conservation and Digital infrastructure
- Department of Public Information Management
- Administrative Department

The national department is responsible for the main branches at Marieberg in Stockholm, Arninge (just north of Stockholm), the Military Archive, and Heraldry Board.

The regional department is responsible for the 7 regional archives (Landsarkiv) in Göteborg, Härnösand, Lund, Uppsala, Vadsterna, Visby, and Östersund which were created between 1895 - 1935. Although Riksarkivet serves as a government archive, it also preserves documents from private individuals, organizations, and companies. Some of these acquired or donated collections date back to the 1600 and 1700s.

Collections

Riksarkivet has a wide variety of records and documents that were used for many different purposes at the national, regional, county, and local level. They have around 100,000 maps and drawings (many of which are architectural drawings of civil buildings) from 1697 – 1993. Collectively the archives have about 750 kilometers (466 miles) of shelf space of mainly parchment and paper documents. Riksarkivet has 180 million pages digitized, of which 65.5 million are accessible through the Digital Research Room.

How to Use Riksarkivet for Genealogy

You can search records and databases on Riksarkivet for free (no registration or sign-in is required).

1. Go to <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/> or search **Riksarkivet.se** in Google.
2. Click on **Other Languages** in the upper right corner of the screen and click on **English**. Another option is to run it in Swedish after learning key words to navigate the website.

3. Click on the link under the heading **Search the collections**, and then on the link **Digital Research Room**.
4. From here, you see 2 columns **Digitised collections** and **Databases**. Here is a short description of what each section offers.

Digitised Collections

Digitised collections are referring to records and documents that have been digitized but have not been indexed. They include:

- A. **Church archives - Kyrkoarkiv:** This is where you search church records such as birth, marriage, death, moving -in, and -out, and household examination records. Do this by:
 - 1. Clicking on **Church archives**, 2. Type the name of the parish in the **Search archive / parish field** (you must use the Swedish letters Å, Ä, and Ö if it's part of the parish name), 3. Choose the **County** from the dropdown list (although this step is not required, sometimes there are parishes by the same name in multiple counties), 4. Click **Search**.
 - After the page reloads, a link with the name of the parish should be shown with the word **kyrkoarkiv** (church archive) next to it. Click on the link, and you will see a list of all digitized collections for this parish. Click on the word **Image** to begin searching the volume.
- B. **Court archives - Domstolsarkiv:** This is where you search court records such as the minutes from court sessions, and estate inventories. Do this by
 - 1. Typing the name of the district (häradsrätt) in the **Search archive / parish field** (you might need to add an "s" to the end of the district name e.g. Ljunits to get the search result), 2. Click on the link using the name of the district with the words **häradsrätts arkiv**, 3. Choose the volume you need and click on **Image**.
- C. **Register of population 1642 - 1820 - Mantalslängder:** This is where you can find the national copy of the Mantals tax records. Do this by,
 - 1. Choosing a **County** from the dropdown menu, 2. Type the name of the parish in the **Parish field** (use Swedish letters Å, Ä, and Ö if needed) and click **Search**, 3. Find the year volume that you need and click on **Image** to search the record.
- D. **SCB birth, marriages and deaths 1860 – 1948:** This is where you can find the birth, marriage, and death extracts created by the Statistiska centralbyrån (SCB). The information was extracted from the ministerial books and sent to government. This is helpful if the ministerial books after 1860 were lost or destroyed. Do this by:
 - 1. Typing the name of the parish in the Parish field, 2. Choose a county from the dropdown list, 3. Click Search, 4. Choose the volume you need and click on the word Image to search the record.

Database Collections

Database collections are records that have been indexed into searchable databases. They include:

- E. **Census:** This is where you can search the SCB extracts from household examination records for the years 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910, 1920, and 1930. These extracts were created every 10 years from the household examination of the time. They represent a "snapshot" of the respective year. Keep in mind, the extracts for 1860 and 1870 used the first

initial instead of the full given name. Although Riksarkivet calls these censuses, the original information came from church household examination records. Search this by:

- 1. Typing the **First name**, **Last name**, approximate **Birth year**, **Birth parish** (and or) **Home parish** into the respective fields, and **Search**. You can search by using all the fields or very few fields as necessary, e.g. if the ancestor had a very unique name, you can search by name alone. 2. Click on the name of the individual to see the indexed data.

F. **Inventory of estates**: This is where you can search for an estate inventory (bouppteckning). Do this by:

- 1. Typing the **First name**, **Last name**, **Place of residence**, (and or) **Home parish** into the respective fields and click **Search**. You can hover your mouse pointer on **Search tips** for additional functions.
- Click on **More options** to narrow down your search to a specific **County**.
- To see the digital copies of estate inventories, look for the **Name** of the ancestor, next to a computer monitor icon, and then on **Image**.
- If you need to request a copy of an estate inventory between 1979 and after 2001 click on the link called **Beställning av bouppteckning upprättad före 1 juli 2001**.

G. **Released Prisoners**: This is where you can search prisoner lists from various prisons in Sweden. Do this by:

- Typing the **First name**, **Last name**, **Birth year**, and **Search**, 2. Click on the prisoner's name and then on **Image**.

H. **Rosenberg's geographical dictionary - : Geografiskt-Statistiskt handlexikon öfver Sverige**: This is a gazetteer from about 1882 – 1883 that has been indexed into a searchable database. It has about 66,000 place names which is good, especially given the historical context, but is realistically limited for practical research. Nonetheless, it is a resource that can be helpful at times. You can search this by:

- Typing a place name into the **Free text** field, or choose a **Parish**, **Judicial district**, or **County**. Or you can simply choose a county and parish for a list of place names in a specific parish.

Other Databases

At any time, you can click on the **Subject (Ämnesområde)** tab to the far right of the **Digital Research Room** Tab. From here you can choose any of the 10 subject titles. The 3 links that are probably the most valuable for common research problems are Emigration, Maps and drawings, and Military.

- **Emigration**: This takes you to a variety of digitized records to browse for your ancestor. These are departure lists and other collections associated to emigration. They have **not** been indexed into a searchable database.
- **Maps**: The **Links to digitised archives** points to 7 subject titles of maps and drawings that were created for a variety of reasons. The Military Archives map and drawing collections is probably the largest collection of the 7 titles. Further down, you see the heading **Databases** where there are maps that have content indexed into searchable databases. The **Swedens oldest large-scale maps** has about 12,000 maps from the 1600s. These maps were created for tax purposes and can be very interesting for the parish you are working in. At this point, the site is no longer offering a version in English. To find maps:

- Click on **Visa kartsamlingarna** to look for a map in the province (Landskap) of interest, and then on the links under each province. Once it opens, navigate for the place you are looking for by using the buttons across the top of the viewer.
- To search the indexed text on these old maps, click on **Sök i texten för äldre geometriska kartor**, type a person, or place name into the search field to the left of the icon **Sök**.
- **Military**: This opens to a page of 34 links showing a wide variety of databases on many subjects. The **Links to digitised archives** point to records that have been digitized but are **not** indexed into searchable databases. You can look for topics for the Army (Armé) or Navy (Båtsmansrullor, or Flottan) or other topics which could be a separate presentation of its own. You can also search **Grill – Statistiskt sammandrag af svenska indelningsverket** under the heading **Databases** to find regiment and company information to search the General Muster Rolls.

Nationell Archives Database - Nationell ArkivDatabas (NAD): Lastly, you need to be aware of Nationell ArkivDatabas (NAD) which is the catalog for the Swedish National Archives. To find this, you can Google **Nationell ArkivDatabas (NAD)** or click on the **Search archives** link under the heading National Archives Database from the Riksarkivet homepage. From here, you can click on the **Search archives** or **Search places** tab to do a search for the records you want.

- **Search archives**: will lead you to the archive listings that show the record type, volumes, and years. For example, type in the name of the parish (use the Swedish letters of Å, Ä, and Ö if it applies) and then click **Digitised material only** and then **Search**. Then look for the link that has the parish name next to the word **kyrkoarkiv**. Click on the little plus symbol for the record type you need. This opens a list of volumes with more plus symbols. Click on the volume year that you need. From there, another field opens with a link under a title called **Reproducerad på**. Click on the link to open the digital record. This opens a new tab in your web browser. Use the navigation tools across the top of the screen to search the record. Click on the << symbol to open More Information to see the item information, link to the image, and the source citation.

Search places: will lead you to pages that show the jurisdictional history of a place. For example, type in the name of a parish in the **Place** field and click **Search**. Then click on the link that has the name of the parish by the word **församling** (which means congregation). The next page shows the jurisdictional information such as the **Pastorat** (chapelry), **Stift** (Diocese), **Län** (County), and **Härad** (judicial district) among others.